

## WHAT IS A SWALE?

A swale is the depressed and often wet grassy area that stretches from the edge of the sidewalk in front of homes (or property line if there is no sidewalk) to the edge of the street.

The main purpose of a swale is to prevent flooding by capturing rainwater runoff from roads and properties and to naturally filter pollutants that are washed from paved areas, i.e. oils, chemicals, etc., before they enter our ground water.



A properly maintained swale. Note that there are no cars parked on the swale.



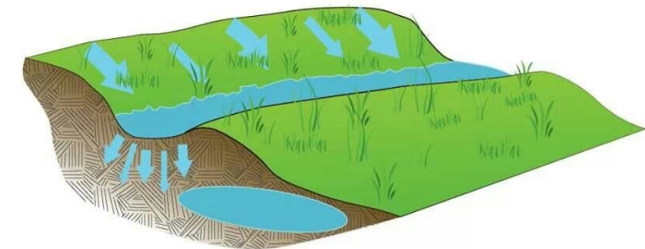
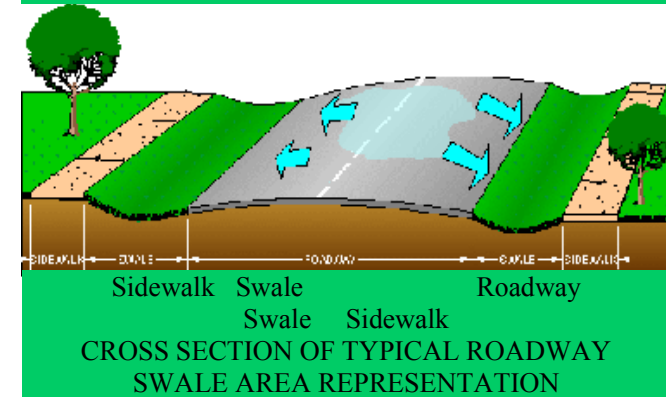
A poorly maintained swale. Note that the entire swale area is compacted due to vehicle parking.



For more information on swales and stormwater management, call (954) 797-1115 or visit <http://www.davie-fl.gov/520/Public-Works-Capital-Projects>

## BE GOOD TO YOUR SWALES

WELL KEPT SWALES HELP YOU AND THE ENVIRONMENT



TOWN OF DAVIE  
PUBLIC WORKS & CAPITAL PROJECTS DEPARTMENT  
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# WHY SHOULD I BE GOOD TO OUR SWALES?

Swales are usually public property owned by the Town. However, property owners are responsible for the maintenance of the swale area in front of their property.

Why should I be good to our swales?

- ♦ A well-kept swale helps the neighborhood look good and helps maintain property value.
- ♦ A swale that does its job properly protects your home and your neighbors' home by helping minimize flooding when it rains.
- ♦ Swales also help protect the environment and our drinking water supply-by acting as filters to remove or reduce pollutants that get washed up by stormwater.



**A properly maintained swale. Note that only the driveway is paved.**

It is normal for water to pond temporarily between 24 to 48 hours in your swale area.



## THREE FUNCTIONS OF A SWALE

1. **To Drain:** Swales drain lots and roadways to help keep them dry.
2. **To Retain:** Swales slow the stormwater to allow water to soak into the ground.
3. **To Treat:** Swales allow suspended solids and pollutants to settle out of the water so treatment is provided before it enters the aquifer, canals, and lakes.

# HOW CAN I BE GOOD TO OUR SWALES?

Properly maintaining your swale area is easy and will help you to reduce street flooding in your neighborhood.

- ♦ Mow the swale regularly to keep grass healthy and under control.
- ♦ Use as little fertilizer, pesticides and herbicides as possible on both your lawn and your swale area.
- ♦ Don't let trash, tree limbs, or garden waste accumulate in your swale.
- ♦ Do not pave or compact your swale area unless it is for a permitted driveway approach.
- ♦ Make sure your driveway design allows water to drain towards your swale. If you wish to replace, repair, or add to your driveway, you must apply and obtain an engineering permit prior to commencing the work.
- ♦ Do not fill in your swale. This reduces its drainage capacity.
- ♦ Avoid parking vehicles in the swale area; this compacts the soil and makes it more difficult for water to be absorbed into the ground.
- ♦ Do not be alarmed if water ponds temporarily (24 to 48 hours) in your swale area, but if water ponds for 72 hours or more, call (954) 797-1115.



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